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# We Explain It: Winds Blew In New U-2 Affair

*High over the northern Pacific, a tiny U. S. plane apparently buffeted by fierce winds, streaked over an island. In that flight—9 minutes over the territory—a grave international incident was in the making. The plane: An American U-2, the type that fell into Soviet hands in May, 1960, with its pilot, Capt. Francis Gary Powers. The island: Sakhalin, run by the Soviet Union.*

By David Wise  
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WASHINGTON.

The United States said yesterday that "severe winds" may have caused a U-2 plane unintentionally to violate Soviet territory last Thursday.

The new U-2 incident hit Washington like a thunder-clap. In May, 1960, a U-2 spy plane piloted by Francis Gary Powers was captured by the Russians. The Big Four Summit meeting collapsed in the wake of the furor it caused. President Eisenhower's trip to the Soviet Union was canceled and the United States announced it would halt any and all flights over Russian territory.

Yesterday, the State Department, in a note personally approved by President Kennedy, said that the ban on deliberate overflights of the Soviet Union "has in no way been altered." The department would not reveal the U-2's mission or where it was based.

Four-and-a-half hours after Moscow protested the "gross violation" of its frontier by a U-2 allegedly flying over Soviet-held Sakhalin Island, north of Japan, State Department press officer Joseph M. Reap read the U. S. note of explanation.

men at a crowded news conference.

The U. S. note said "Precautions intended to prevent such incidents are under review." State department officials called the note a reply, rather than an "apology."

## What the U. S. Said

The U. S. note did not definitely say that the U-2 had overflown Soviet territory.

It said:

"A patrol aircraft operated by the United States Air Force was in the northern Pacific area east of Sakhalin at about the time specified in the Soviet note. The pilot of the aircraft has reported that he was flying a directed course well outside of Soviet territorial limits but encountered severe winds during this night time flight and may therefore have unintentionally overflown the southern tip of Sakhalin."

The note did not identify the plane as a U-2 but after Mr. Reap had read it, a State Department official said the plane was a U-2. The department official would not say whether the plane carried cameras. He declined to say for what purposes U-2s are flying. He would not reveal the name of the pilot, or say where U-2s are based around the world.

The State Department official, who declined to be quoted by name in answering questions about the U. S. note, said the pilot and plane had returned safely. Asked whether the plane was shot at, the official said no, as far as he knew.

The official said he did not know, when asked whether U-2 planes were flying for any other agency of the government besides the Air Force. Two years ago, Mr. Powers' flight was carried out by the Central Intelligence Agency, using the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as a "cover."

While declining to say whether the plane carried a camera, the State Department official did note that it was a night flight.

## White House Silent

The White House—undoubtedly recalling the welter of U. S. statements issued after the Powers affair in 1960—main-